

Pre-Visit Guide

Grade 4

Overview: A Frontier Fort

In preparation for a visit to Fort McKavett, students will learn about the fort's construction, its important function as a safe stopover for settlers heading west, the changing landscape of settlement in Texas in the mid-1800s, westward expansion, and the establishment U.S. military forts. Students will also have an opportunity to imagine serving for a day as a frontier soldier at Fort McKavett.

Social Studies TEKS

(4) History. The student understands the political, economic, and social changes in Texas during the last half of the 19th century. The student is expected to:

(D) examine the effects upon American Indian life resulting from changes in Texas, including the Red River War, building of U.S. forts and railroads, and loss of buffalo.

(6) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:

(A) apply geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to construct and interpret maps.

(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to:

(A) identify and explain clusters and patterns of settlement in Texas at different time periods such as prior to the Texas Revolution, after the building of the railroads, and following World War II.

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States and Texas;

(C) organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps.

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Materials

- Historical images for display/distribution
- *Listen and Map the Forts* resource

Vocabulary

- **frontier:** lands along the edge of the settled part of a country
- **migration:** moving from one place to another

Historical Context

Before Texas became a state in 1845, settled lands in Texas were limited to the coast, east Texas, and land grant settlements in central and south Texas. All of the western lands were dominated by Native American peoples, most notably Lipan Apaches and Comanches.

By the late 1840s, white settlers were pushing the line of settlement further west. Americans began moving west from the settled eastern states, across the prairie territories, and toward the western territories such as California and Colorado. In 1848, this migration was further fueled by the California Gold Rush. Thousands of settlers took to the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails to cross the continent. Two roads from San Antonio to El Paso, the Upper and Lower Emigrant Roads, took settlers through west Texas.

In early 1852, the U.S. Army established Fort McKavett, west of Fort Mason and approximately 181 miles from San Antonio on the Upper Road. Soldiers stationed at the fort were responsible for providing safe escort to travelers, mail carriers, and wagon trains heading west into frontier territory.



“The American Soldier, 1855.” U.S. Army of Military History, Prints & Posters, The American Soldier: Set 1, <https://history.army.mil/html/artphoto/pripos/amsoldier1.html> (Accessed November 26, 2017).

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Activity: To the Texas Frontier!

15 minutes

Display the word *frontier* for the class. Give students a few minutes to write their reflections on the word.

Ask students to share what they have written. Take notes on the board to capture students' ideas. Give the vocabulary definition of the word at the end of the discussion.

Display or distribute the **Forts in Texas 1854 map**. Explain that a line of forts ran north to south throughout the state to protect settlers. There were also forts built along the roads to El Paso to protect people traveling west and along the Rio Grande River to guard the border with Mexico.

Ask:

- Why would travelers in west Texas might need army protection. [Native American activity]
- Have students identify the Upper and Lower Roads on the map and find Fort McKavett. On which road was it located? [Upper]

As an extension, explore the evolution of federal forts in Texas at this webpage: "U.S. Army on the Texas Frontier" (<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/military.html>) Scroll down to the interactive map, "U.S. Forts in Texas: 1849-1860" and click through the years to see the fort line shift.

Primary Source Activity: Mapping the Forts

25 minutes

Display the **Galveston Weekly Journal newspaper article from 1852**. Distribute the **Mapping the Forts activity**.

Tell students that you will read the newspaper article aloud. They are to listen for hints about where the five forts mentioned in the article are located. Have them circle the name of each of the five forts. Show students where the forts are located if they were unable to circle them on the map.

After listening and circling the forts, tell students to look closely at the map to fill in the blanks on the activity resource. Tell them to look primarily around the areas of the five forts they circled.

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Map answer key: The five forts and related landmarks are circled on the map below.



Activity answer key:

1. What is different about the spelling of Fort McKavett's name on the 1857 map? [an e at the end]
2. What three forts were located near Fort Territt? [Fort McKavett, Fort Mason, Fort Martin Scott]
3. Which fort was located in San Saba County? [Fort Chadbourne]
4. Which fort was located between Bald Mountain and Caddo Peaks? [Fort Phantom Hill]
5. Which fort was located in Young County? [Fort Belknap]

As an extension, display or distribute the full image of the **1857 map of Texas forts**. Have students note other geographical features indicated on the map, additional labels, titles, etc.

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Activity: Frontier Settlements and Native Peoples

25 minutes

Historical Context

in the 1800s, immigrants from the United States, Mexico, and Europe poured into frontier territory, threatening tribal hunting grounds and buffalo herds. Native Americans raided livestock and settlements to counter the loss of their land. In the 1850s, the U.S. military established forts such as Fort McKavett throughout west Texas in response to the tribal attacks and to increase safety for travelers heading west. Native American tribes remaining in Texas, such as the Comanche and Lipan Apaches, lost as much as half their populations due to hunting grounds blocked by forts and settlements, bison herds decimated through hunting by immigrants and settlers, and fatal diseases brought by European settlers.

After battling starvation and disease for years and losing most of their supplies and horses in battles with the U. S. Army, Native American resistance on the frontier came to an end as a result of the Red River War of 1874-1875. Remaining native groups were forced to move to reservations near Fort Sill in present-day Oklahoma.

A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its bank. These soldiers cut down my timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry.

Santana, Chief of the Kiowas 1867

Santana, Chief of the Kiowas, 1867. *U.S. Bureau of Ethnography Annual Report*, 17th, 1895–96.

<http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/primarysource/viewdetails.aspx?PrimarySourceId=1018> (Accessed November 12, 2017).



American bison Apache, ca. 1905. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003671128/>. (Accessed November 18, 2017.)

Although combat was a small part of the frontier soldier's life, Fort McKavett troops participated in several major Indian campaigns including Mackenzie's and Shafter's raids into Mexico, and the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon during the Red River War.

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Activity: Frontier Settlement and Its Impact on Native Peoples

25 minutes

Distribute or display the **image of Comanches** on the reservation at Fort Sill. Have students complete the **National Archive photo analysis worksheet**. Point out the Library of Congress citation that gives information about the photo. Discuss responses.

As an extension, have students write a personal narrative reaction to the photo or a fictional narrative from the photo subjects' point of view.

In-Class Extension: County Formation

As a class, explore the evolution of county formation in Texas. The formation of counties clearly shows the expansion of settled lands in Texas and the shrinking frontier territory.

View the “Interactive Map of Texas County Formation History” at <http://www.mapofus.org/texas/>. Click on the years 1852-1858. Discuss the dramatic shift west of settled counties between 1857 and 1858. Menard county (abbreviated MEN on the map) was one of the many counties created in 1858. Fort McKavett (active 1852-1858 and 1868-1883) and the other U.S. Army forts established in the 1850s played an important role in the protected settlement of west Texas.

Assessment

Evaluate student participation and printouts for completeness and understanding.

Take-Home Extension

Tell students to create a **KWL Chart** to take home. Have them complete the “What I **K**now” and “What I **W**ant to Know” columns about Fort McKavett. After completing all pre-visit preparations and the on-site field trip, have students complete the “What I **L**earned” column for learning assessment.

Additional Resources & Extensions

The Portal to Texas History

<https://texashistory.unt.edu>

The Handbook of Texas Online

<https://tshaonline.org/handbook>

Oregon-California Trails Association

<http://southern-trails.org/trail-map/newtrailmap>

“Timeline of Texas and the Western Frontier”

<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/36-44.html>

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Activity Map: Forts of Texas 1854

“U.S. Army on the Texas Frontier” webpage (<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/military.html>).



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Activity Image: *Galveston Weekly Journal* newspaper article, 1852

Smith, H. H. Weekly Journal. (Galveston, Tex.), Vol. 3, No. 36, Ed. 1 Friday, December 10, 1852, newspaper, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph182225/m1/3/?q=fort%20mckavett (Accessed February 17, 2018).

On the northwestern and northern frontier, and high up in the country, we find four companies of the 1st Infantry, under Col. Bainbridge, at Fort Territt, a post, at the head of the Llanos; five companies of the 8th Infantry, under Major Morrison, at Fort McKavett, at the head of the San Saba, and five companies of the same regiment, under Captain Lee, at Fort Chadbourne, a new post on Oak Creek, a stream emptying into the Colorado about thirty miles above the mouth of the Concho. Five companies of the 5th Infantry, under Col. Waite, are at the post at Phantom Hill, on the clear fork of the Brazos, and five companies of the same regiment, under Col. Loomis, at Fort Belknap, a post on the salt fork of the stream. The above force forms the exterior line against the encroachments of the Indians on the upper frontier of Texas, and as scouting parties from the different posts are kept continually out, the most ample protection is afforded in that quarter.

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Activity Map: Texas, 1857

Rogers, Henry D. & Johnston, Alexander Keith. State of Texas / by H.D. Rogers & A. Keith Johnston ; engraved by W. & A.K. Johnston, map, 1857, London, David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Collection Cartography Associates, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~265~30121:State-Of-Texas--By-Prof--H-D--Rogers#> (Accessed February 17, 2018).



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Activity Image: Frontier Settlement and Its Impact on Native Peoples

Soule, William S, photographer. Ta-Her-Ye-Qua-Hip or Horse-Backs Camp. No-Co-Nie. Comanches / W.S. Soule, photo. Fort Sill, I.T. Fort Sill Oklahoma, ca. 1873. Mar. 22. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006675508/>. (Accessed November 18, 2017.)



W. S. Soule, Photo.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873, by John P. Soule, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Fort Sill, I. T.

TA-HER-YE-QUA-HIP or HORSE-BACKS CAMP. B.

NO-CO-NIE. COMANCHES.

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National Archives Graphic Organizer: Frontier Settlement, Native Peoples

Analyze a Photograph

Meet the photo.

Quickly scan the photo. What do you notice first?

Type of photo (check all that apply):

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portrait | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial/Satellite | <input type="checkbox"/> Action | <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Panoramic | <input type="checkbox"/> Posed | <input type="checkbox"/> Candid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documentary | <input type="checkbox"/> Selfie | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

Is there a caption? ☐ yes ☐ no

Observe its parts.

List the people, objects and activities you see.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS	ACTIVITIES

Write one sentence summarizing this photo.

Try to make sense of it.

Answer as best you can. The caption, if available, may help.

Who took this photo?

Where is it from?

When is it from?

What was happening at the time in history this photo was taken?

Why was it taken? List evidence from the photo or your knowledge about the photographer that led you to your conclusion.

Use it as historical evidence.

What did you find out from this photo that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents, photos, or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?



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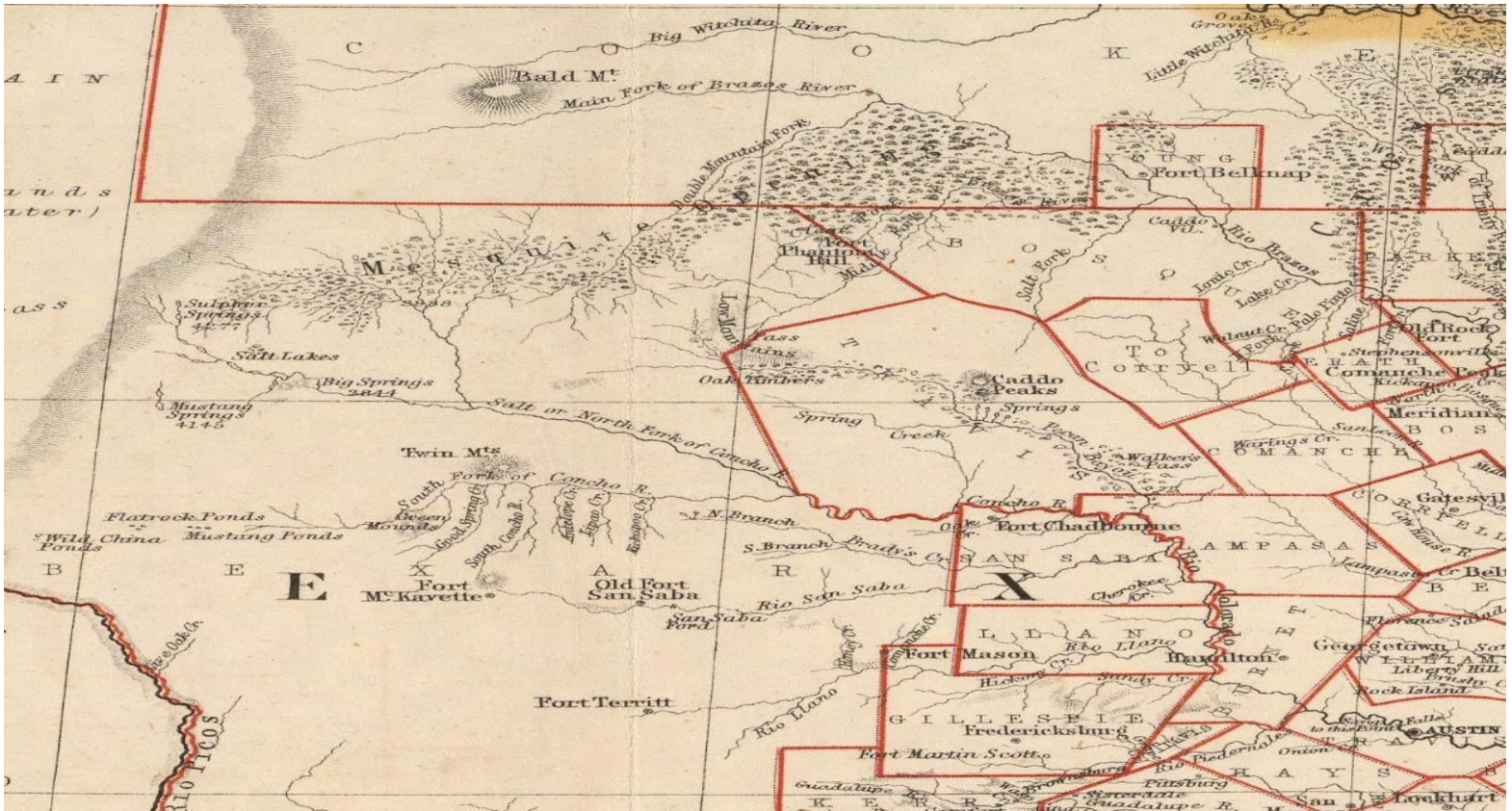
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Mapping the Forts

Listen for fort location clues from the newspaper article from 1857. Find and **circle the five forts** named in the article. Then look closely at the map to answer the questions.



- What is different about the spelling of Fort McKavett's name on the 1857 map? _____
- What three forts were located near Fort Territt? _____
- Which fort was located in San Saba County? _____
- Which fort was located between Bald Mountain and Caddo Peaks? _____
- Which fort was located in Young County? _____

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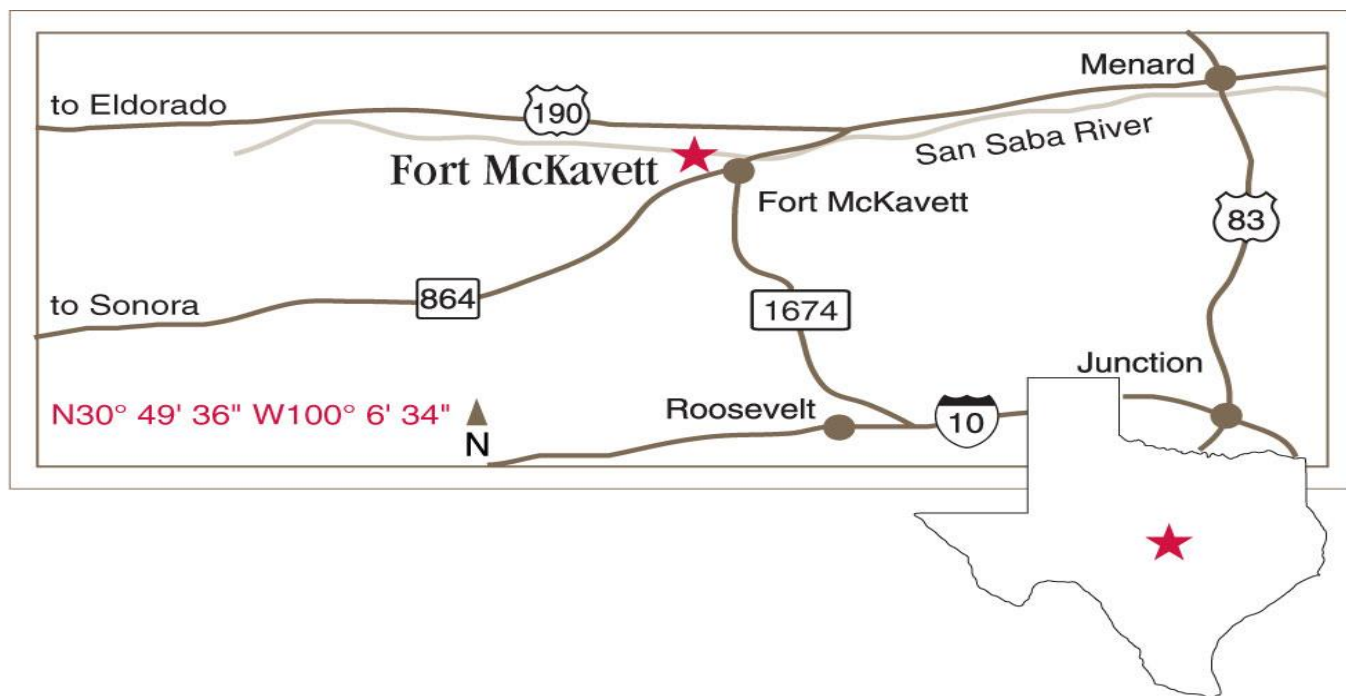
Site Visit Recommendations

- Complete the pre-visit lesson or other introductory lessons prior to your field trip.
- Divide students into small groups, each with an adult chaperone.
- Make sure students bring pencils. Pens and markers are not allowed in the exhibits.

Information

To schedule a site visit field trip for your students, please call 432-836-4391, or complete a reservation form on our website.

For admission prices and hours of operation, please visit us online at <http://visitfortmckavett.com>.



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